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# The Rail Report

NCDOT Rail



March 2015

## NCDOT seeking comments on Comprehensive State Rail Plan

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has developed a Draft Comprehensive State Rail Plan in compliance with the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act, which is implemented and overseen by the Federal Railroad Administration. Under this Act, all states are required to develop state rail plans at least every five years. The State Rail Plan is consistent with the state's long-standing rail planning practice and will transform transportation, economic, land use and other data into a thoughtful strategic freight and passenger investment plan. It is also a major component of Governor McCrory's 25-Year Vision for North Carolina.

NCDOT is seeking your comments on the Draft Comprehensive State Rail Plan. This is an opportunity for citizens and the business community alike to help guide the implementation of the Governor's Vision for North Carolina in regards to how the state's rail system is invested in and developed over the next 25 years. **The public comment period begins February 20, 2015 and will close on March 21, 2015. Click on the links below to access and comment on the Rail Plan.**

**Read the Draft  
State Rail Plan**



**Comment on  
the Draft  
State Rail Plan**



## Eastern Infrastructure Improvements Study presented to Legislature

The Rail Division delivered the Eastern Infrastructure Improvements Study (SB 402 Section 43.23) to the NC General Assembly in early January. The study, which was developed in collaboration with the Departments of Commerce, Agriculture & Consumer Services, and the NC Railroad Company, combined market analysis, logistics, conceptual design, and return-on-investment in evaluating infrastructure and facility improvements to increase the success of the Global TransPark (GTP) and synergy with the Port of Morehead City. Also studied was network analysis and return-on-investment feasibility of restoring the inactive Wallace to Castle Hayne (W2CH) rail corridor. This work was integrated with the upcoming State Rail Plan based on Governor McCrory's 25 Year Transportation Vision. A recommended outcome of the study is creation of the Secretary of Transportation's Freight Intermodal Advisory Council to insure coordination amongst agencies involved in state development and logistics. Other recommendations include seeking Federal funding for the W2CH rail line restoration, implementation of the Wilmington rail/highway safety study, investigation of a new rail bridge to support the Port of Wilmington, pursuing a lease for operation of the GTP spur track, more robust marketing of the GTP, study for an extension of the Harvey Parkway and rail access from the GTP to the east, a traffic safety improvement plan for Arendell St./US-70 through Morehead City, as well as evaluation of a Morehead City Bypass and improvements to and development of Radio Island.



## Learn more about the History of Transportation In NC

### MOVING North Carolina



**Thursday, March 26 @ 10:00 PM on UNC-TV**

***Moving North Carolina***, a new public television documentary, is the story of transportation in our state from ancient foot trails to modern superhighways. But far more than a tale of vessels and vehicles, roadways and rails, it is the very human story of how transportation shaped who we are, where we came from, how we got here, and why we live where we do. It is the story of men and women who envisioned a better way of life and led the way in making the vision a reality. It is the story of how we evolved over hundreds of years from a spattering of isolated, self-sufficient farms and small towns into this one special place we call North Carolina.

***Moving North Carolina*** was created by long-time North Carolina video producer Michael Sheehan, and is hosted by Tar Heel author, musician and raconteur Bland Simpson. The video features original music by Jack Herrick of the Red Clay Ramblers.

## Vehicle Detection Radar System Program at Railroad-Highway Crossings will expand



In keeping with NCDOT's mission to connect people and places in North Carolina safely and efficiently, with accountability and environmental sensitivity, the Rail Division has tested Dual Matrix Vehicle Detection Radar systems at three highway-railroad grade crossings during the past year. The systems tested were

located at the crossings at Williamson Avenue in Elon, 5th Street in Mebane and Ellis Road in Durham.

The purpose of the project was to gauge the effectiveness of the radar system in detecting vehicles so that simultaneous gate drop could be implemented at 4-quadrant gated crossings, and to evaluate the effectiveness of simultaneous gate drop in deterring motorists from running around gates to beat a train. Also if a vehicle is in a crossing when a gate drops, a slight delay in the lowering of the exit gate in front of the vehicle gives it a clear way out.

The systems have proven to be effective and during testing by NCDOT and the Insititue for Traffic Research and Education (ITRE). During the next two years, there are plans to install nine additional vehicle detection systems at the following railroad crossings:

- Franklin Boulevard in Greenboro
- 3rd Street in Mebane
- Oak Avenue in Elon
- East 1st Street in Kannapolis
- Elmira Street in Burlington
- Morrisville-Carpenter Road in Morrisville
- Franklin Boulevard in Greensboro
- Dillon Road in Jamestown

Locations are chosen because of a number of reasons, such as intersection geometrics, incidents occurring at the crossings, higher speed trains and traffic volumes. The radar systems are being paid for through FHWA Section 1103(f), Freight Rail & Rail Crossing Safety and Highway Safety Improvement Program funds. Video cameras on the



systems provide continuous real-time feed and train activated clips. Below is a screen shot from the Elon Williamson Street camera, showing zone activation for vehicles and approach circuit for an oncoming train.

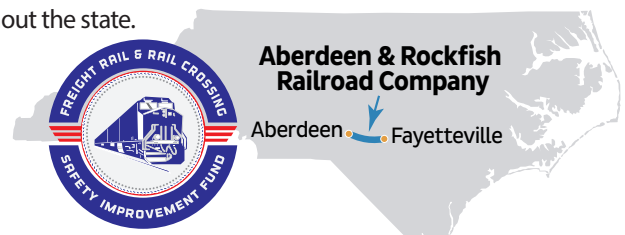
**Detection Zones pick up 2 vehicles traveling in two different directions. two differents.**

**Approach Circuit picks up trains.**




## FR&RCSI Update – A&R Improvements

The Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad continues to upgrade its infrastructure to support current and new customers. The A&R has partnered with NCDOT on state and federal projects to provide enhanced service to customers like Tidewater Transit, Hexion, and their newest customer, Tyton Biofuels NC, which is expected to begin production of ethanol later this year. Short line railroads like the A&R are valuable to future economic development efforts throughout the state.





## Ridership & Revenue on NC's Amtrak Service – December 2014 vs. 2013

	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2014	2013	% +/-	2014	2013	% +/-
Piedmont	14,885	15,667	-5%	306,414	\$323,636	-5%
Carolinian	26,978	27,331	-1%	\$1,903,412	\$1,934,118	-2%

## CURRENT TRAVEL DEALS

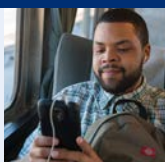
1

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2

**College Students get 15% off fares now through April 25th by using fare code V632.**



## Travel Mid-Week & Save 10%

3

Get 10% off the price of your ticket automatically if you travel on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. Tickets must be reserved three days in advance to get the discount. No promo code is required. Purchase tickets at [ncbytrain.org](http://ncbytrain.org).

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Book your trip for Charlotte, Kannapolis, Salisbury, High Point, Greensboro, Burlington, Durham, Cary, Raleigh, Selma, Wilson and Rocky Mount, Virginia and the Northeast, or connect to Florida...

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FOLLOW US!



Seats are limited. Other restrictions may apply. Piedmont and Carolinian are operated as a partnership between Amtrak and NCDOT. Amtrak is a registered service mark of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.

## Travel with Our State—NC to DC!

**June 4-7, 2015**

Our State Magazine is partnering with Amtrak and NCDOT to offer an excursion from North Carolina to Washington, DC. This package includes a walking tour of historic Union Station, tours of Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, National WWII Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Korean War Veterans Memorial. There will also be tours of the U.S. Capitol, Diplomatic Reception Rooms

at the State Department, Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, Ford's Theatre, Petersen House, Washington National Cathedral, Hillwood Estate Museum and Gardens and a dinner cruise on the Potomac aboard the Odyssey.

For reservations or more information, contact Emily Barrett, AAA Vacations at (800) 933-2621, ext. 16019 or [ecbarrett@mailaaa.com](mailto:ecbarrett@mailaaa.com).



## Training for new Volunteer Train Hosts held at Capital Yard

Thirteen new recruits participated in a training session to become North Carolina Volunteer Train Hosts on February 6. Persons interested in joining the association must first apply to the program and pass an

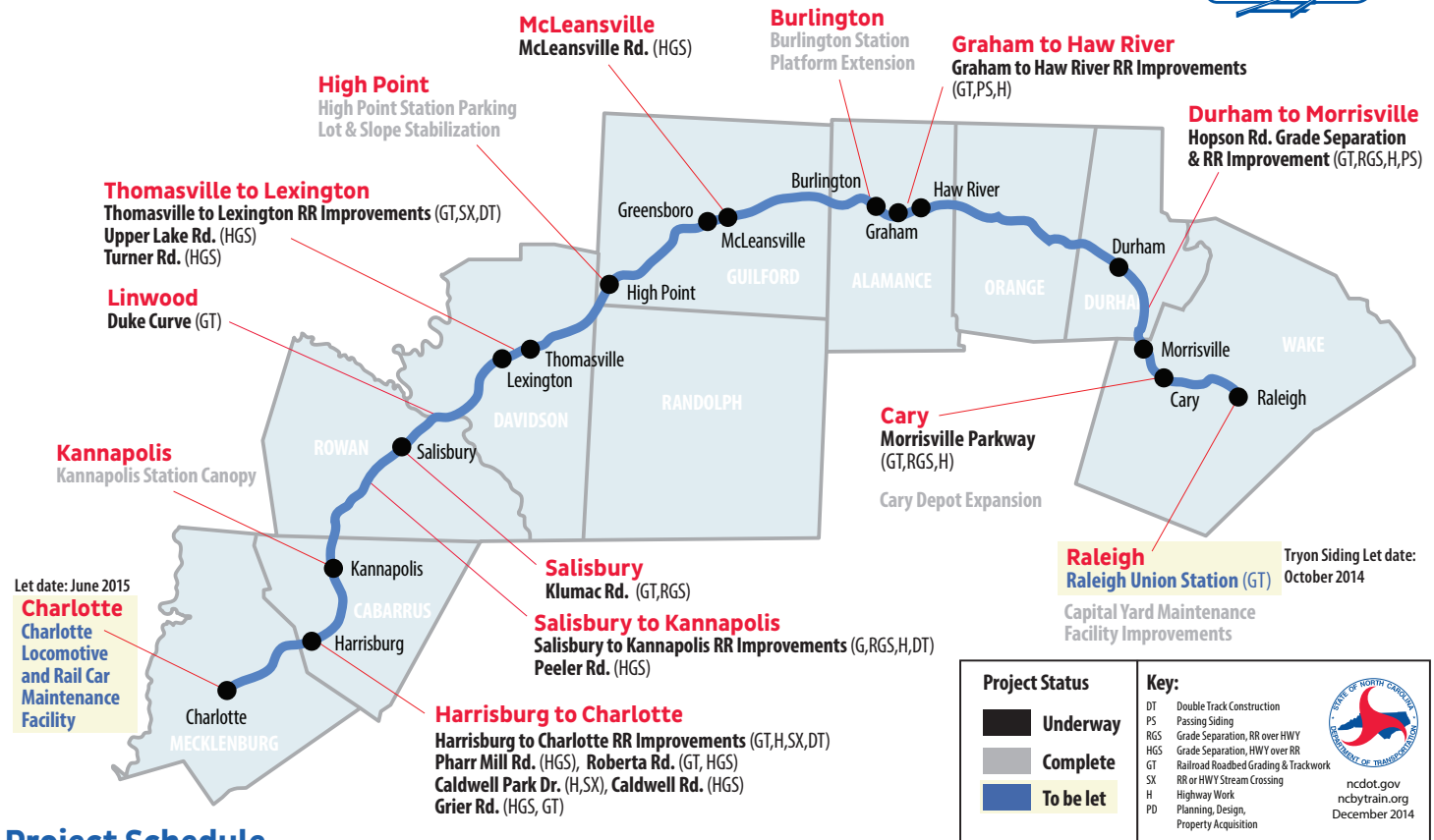
initial screening and phone interview. Next, hosts must complete a one-day training session and two qualifying training trips with an experienced host. Once accepted into the program, hosts must commit to making at least one trip every 60 days.

These volunteers serve as North Carolina's goodwill ambassadors onboard the *Piedmont* and *Carolinian*. Train hosts volunteer their time to ride the trains to assist passengers, promote passenger services and answer questions about the route, ground transportation and area attractions. Many also serve as station hosts and at marketing events and activities across the state.

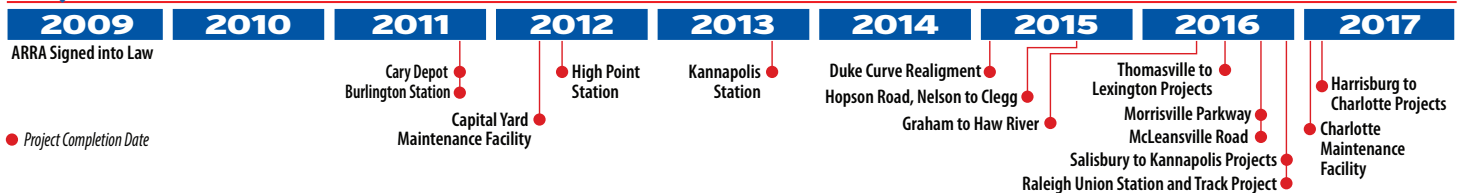
This group of more than 100 donated nearly 900 hours in January.



# Piedmont Improvement Program – January 2015 Status Report



## Project Schedule



## ARRA Funds Spent to Date (effective 1/31/2014)

Component	Expenditure
PD&A/ROW	\$43,829,237.32
Equipment Procurement & Rebuild	\$26,125,017.20
Stations & Facilities	\$10,933,565.36
Track & Structures	\$136,975,421.65
CRISP	\$2,180,376.32
<b>Program Totals</b>	<b>\$220,043,617.85</b> of \$520M awarded FRA Grant Funds

## PIP Milestones

### Reid to North Kannapolis:

Bridge construction is underway on the new Kimball Road extension and railroad underpass in Rowan County. This new roadway will provide a grade separated crossing of the railroad between the towns of Landis and China Grove. The bridge construction is part of the 10-mile "Reid to North Kannapolis" double track project between Salisbury and Kannapolis.





## Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – January 2015



P-5201 Morrisville Parkway



U-4716 Hopson Road bridge construction



U-4716 Nelson to Clegg passing siding construction



P-5205 Graham to Haw River Passing Siding – Grading



P-5204 McLeansville Road, erosion control



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, track construction



## Piedmont Improvement Program Project Photos – January 2015



C-4901 Bowers to Lake, track construction



U-3459 Klumac Road column pour



P-5206 Peeler Road Bridge construction



P-5206 Reid to North Kannapolis, sub-ballast



P-5208 Haydock to Junker - Roberta Road Bridge construction



P-5208 Haydock to Junker - track construction